

Evangelism

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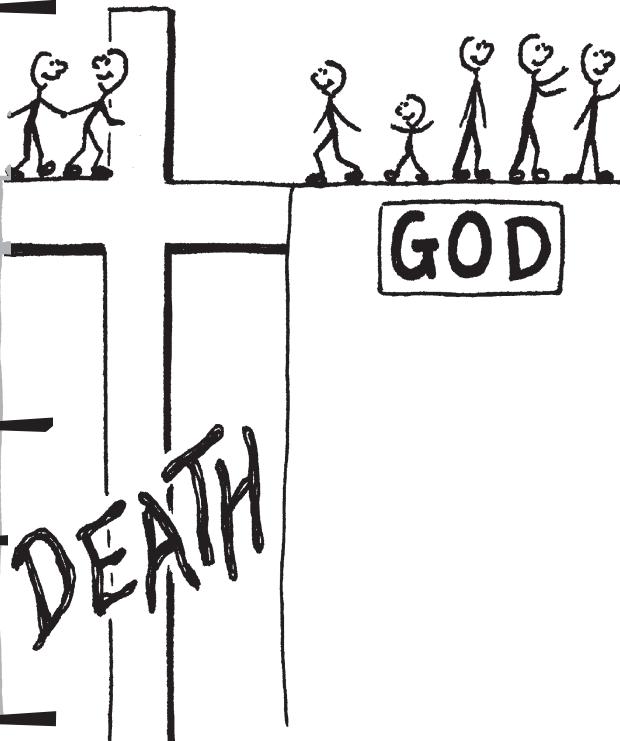
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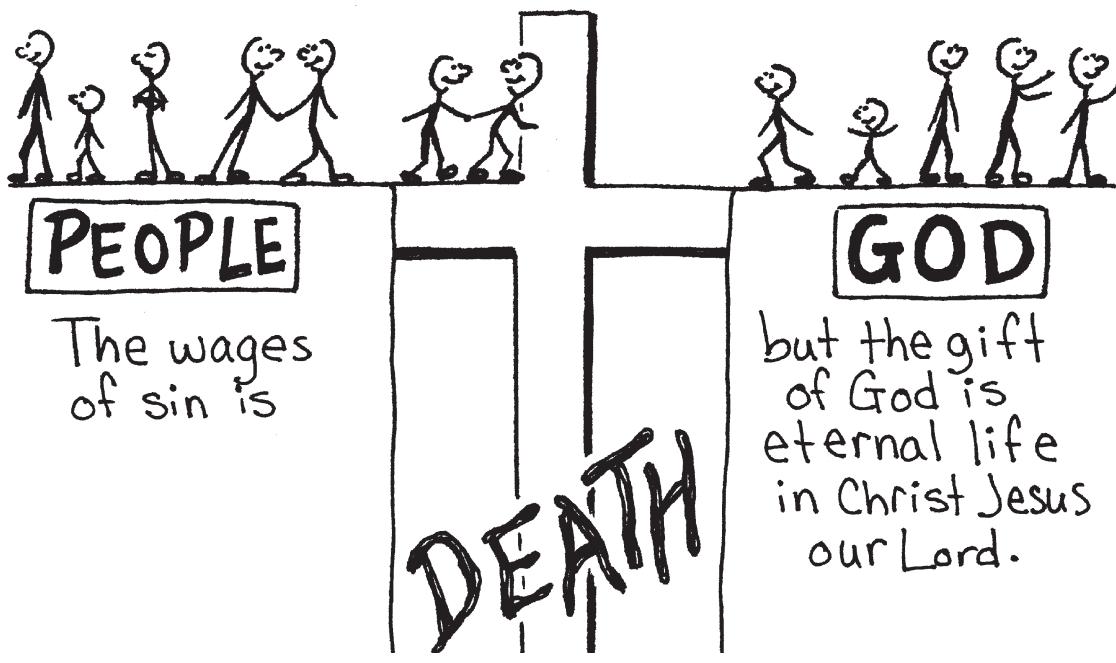


compelled BY LOVE

Jesus Christ, God Himself, came to earth to show people what God is like. ...*Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.* ... John 14:9 Even more remarkable, He came to pay the price that was necessary to reconcile people to Himself.

God came to where people lived and worked. He came as a human being, since they were human. He came speaking their language, so they could understand. He even told His message in stories using the familiar ingredients from their daily life so they would remember and ponder. He efforted Himself profoundly to communicate who He was and how to experience His love and power. He communicated. He was called the Word. *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14*

God's central motivating focus remains the same – to communicate with people who He is and how to love and be loved by Him, the message of reconciliation. But, He has turned over to you and me the communication of that message. *All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 2 Corinthians 5:18-20*



You are Christ's ambassador, His representative.

Therefore, when you appeal to people to be reconciled to God, do it like Jesus modeled. Communicate in such a way that people can understand – not in the way **you** understand. In order to do this, you must climb into their brain, listen carefully to their views, try to understand their perspective, and find meaningful ways to bridge the message into their life. Pray, even in the midst of a conversation, that God will give you insight as to how to communicate His message to them. Listen to Him and obey what He tells you.

→ Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23.

What is Apostle Paul's goal?

What is his strategy?

To *become all things to all men* does not mean to sin like they are so that they feel comfortable with you. Because you are Christ's ambassador, you belong to the kingdom of light. You must maintain the standards of God's kingdom, though not self-righteously. People who love darkness will not be comfortable around the light because the light exposes their hearts. Jesus was with sinners without sinning. If you love people, even though you do not sin with them, they will know Jesus has been near. Ask Jesus to show you how to do it in your situation. Then, do what He tells you.

→ Read 1 John 4:10-11.

What motivated God to pay the price for reconciliation?

What is to be your response to His love (verse 11)?

→ Read 1 John 4:18-19.

What is the antidote to fear?

If you struggle with speaking with people about Christ, perfect love is your solution. It drives out your shyness, reticence, or fear.

Perfect love comes from God. You have to get it from Him. Ask God to increase your love for people so that you care more about their eternal destiny than your own comfort. Then, practice changing the way you think about people. Think about their needs, especially their need for Jesus. Think about how priceless each one is to God – no one is insignificant. Think about how Jesus conducts a focused search for each person like a shepherd who lost a sheep, a woman who lost a coin, or a father who lost a son (see Luke 15).
"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." Luke 19:10

If you ask God to increase and perfect your love, and you practice thinking about people from God's perspective, you will find new freedom to work with Jesus in reconciling people to Him. You will be compelled by love, living for Jesus and His priorities. *For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.* 2 Corinthians 5:14



A couple of questions:

- **Should I wait until I am a better Christian before I tell people about Jesus?** No. You'll be waiting the rest of your life.
 - **If I sin and unbelievers see it, will they think I (and all Christians) am a hypocrite?** Only if you act like one. A hypocrite is a liar; he/she pretends to be perfect and, when sin is exposed, denies the problem and covers it up. You must, with God's strength, try very hard to live a life of integrity so that Christ's name is not maligned. However, if you sin, you have the opportunity to model what the real Christian life is like – the process of allowing Jesus to change you. Then, when your unbelieving colleagues give their lives to Jesus, they know what it looks like to walk with Him. They have watched you respond humbly to His conviction and yield to the required changes.
-



Jesus has reconciled you to Himself so that you can bring the message of reconciliation to others. Make this psalm of David into a prayer of thanksgiving and a prayer of purpose.

I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the LORD. I proclaim righteousness in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips, as you know, O LORD. I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and salvation. I do not conceal your love and your truth from the great assembly.

Psalm 40:1-3, 9-10

Evangelism is War

With prayer and your testimony, go into the spiritual P.O.W. camps where Satan holds people hostage. With prayer, bind up the prison guards. With prayer, demolish the imprisoning strongholds (alcoholism, materialism, self-sufficiency,...). "In the Name of Jesus, I bind every evil power that holds Jake a prisoner. I demolish the stronghold of materialism and greed in his life. Have mercy on his soul and bring him to repentance." With Jesus as your Leader, rescue the captives. *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Colossians 1:13-14*



Evangelism 6

explain THE GOSPEL

Make the Message Clear

Write summaries for each of the following verses substituting other words for repent, sin, redemption, believe, and other terms familiar only within Christianity.

In other words:

Repent – turn from running my own life; ask forgiveness for things I regret; turn from doing what I know is wrong

Sin – wrongs; selfishness; directing my own life; pleasing myself primarily; regrets

Redemption – God took my mistakes (regrets, wrongs) and traded them for His goodness.

Believe – believe that Christ's payment for my wrongs is true, acting on that belief by verbally accepting His payment, and meaning what I say.

1. Our Condition: Isaiah 53:6, Isaiah 59:1-2, Romans 3:23

For example: Romans 3:23 Everyone has violated his own conscience.

2. God's Plan: 1 John 4:10, Romans 5:6-8, 1 Peter 3:18a

3. Our Response: Acts 3:19, John 1:12-13, 2 Corinthians 5:15, Mark 8:34-35 ("he must deny himself" means to turn from selfishness, self-will, self-direction)

4. The Result: John 3:16, Romans 8:31-39, John 10:10

Restate your summaries into one or two clear sentences for **each** of the four parts of the gospel message. Practice the message with a friend.

Often, you only have a couple of minutes to tell the essence of the gospel message. Now you are ready with a clear, succinct explanation.

Moving the Conversation Toward Spiritual Matters

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Listed on the following page are questions that are helpful in transitioning a conversation toward spiritual matters. Listen sincerely to your friend. Listen intently to Jesus.

-
1. What is your religious background?
How would you describe your experiences, positive or negative? In what ways?
How involved are you now compared to the past? Why?
What are your thoughts now about attending church?
 2. What has been your impression of people you consider to be Christians?
 3. What is your impression of how the media depicts Christianity?
 4. What is your perspective of Christian leaders today?
 5. What are some of your biggest issues with Christianity?
 6. If you were to define a Christian in one or two sentences, what would you say?
 7. If you could ask Jesus any question and you knew He would answer, what would it be?
 8. If you were to describe your spiritual journey on a scale of 1-10, with 1 having no interest, 10 being a spiritual giant, and 5 "crossing the line of faith," what number would you choose for yourself? Why?
 9. I'd be curious sometime to hear who you think God is and what He's like.
 10. Try these three together, but one at a time:
What do you think is humanity's basic problem?
What's your philosophy of life?
How does your philosophy of life address humanity's basic problem?

Your Story, God's Story

Write your story of giving your life to Jesus. Limit it to one page. Practice it so you can tell someone in about three to five minutes. Include:

- 1. What your life was like without Jesus**
- 2. How you came to be introduced to Him**
- 3. What you specifically said and did to turn your life over to Him**
- 4. The changes that have transpired since your decision**

You have experienced many situations that are common to both believers and unbelievers. Following is a list of examples. You may choose to write about one of these situations and how Jesus intervened and helped you. These experiences are part of your story, your journey with God. They provide relational bridges, common ground with unbelievers where you can listen compassionately and share appropriately the difference Jesus has made. Check the experiences in the list that have touched your life directly or indirectly.

Source for the following list: Ralph Neighbor, *Touching Hearts Guidebook*, TOUCH Outreach Ministries, Inc. Houston, Texas, 1997, pages 84-85. Used with permission. For more information about the Touching Hearts Guidebook and discipling others through mentoring relationships, call 1-800-735-5865 or write P. O. Box 19888, Houston, Texas, 77224-2888.

- Death of a family member
- Marital separation
- Personal injury
- Marriage
- Pregnancy
- Debts piling up
- Change in residence
- Change in schools
- Bad grades
- Family conflicts
- Suicidal thoughts
- Change in sleeping habits
- Change in eating habits
- Change in finances
- Vacation
- Breakup with boy/girl friend
- Guilt over past activities
- Birth of a child
- Stress at work/school
- Finishing school
- Entering military service
- Leaving military service
- Change in church activities
- Falling in love
- Divorce
- Jail term
- Serious illness
- Fired from job
- Sexual problems
- Change in social activities
- Auto accident
- Change of employment
- Trouble with boss
- Trouble with in-laws
- Death of a close friend
- Cancer
- Heart attack
- Stress at holiday seasons
- Abortion
- Promotion
- Rejection by family
- Decision to leave home
- Change of vocation
- Change in recreation

Make Your Own Pamphlet

Turn your story into a short pamphlet no more than 600 words long. Use the story of how you came to follow Jesus or a story of His intervention in one of the situations listed above. Give it to your waitperson at a restaurant (with your generous tip), the gas station cashier, someone at the laundromat, another student, anyone at all no matter how brief the connection. Often, you won't have time to tell your story, or it doesn't come up conveniently in the conversation. Giving someone a pamphlet with a story from your life solves this dilemma in a warm, relational way. Following is an example of a pamphlet the author wrote.

THE STORY OF HOW I BROKE MY NECK AND LIVED ON

Joy Schroeder

Stories of tragedy often begin by stating that the fateful day began like any other. That should warn us to be suspicious of days like that. Of course, I was not suspicious on March 14, 1987 and went to the grocery store instead. As I left the parking area with my car full of chicken, etc., I was hit by a speeding car driven by a young man having a very good time. The impact knocked me unconscious and broke my neck. The firemen spent an hour using the Jaws of Life to get me out of the car.

I woke up on the ground with many worried faces looking down on me. I couldn't move and I struggled for

carry in a bundle of good deeds hoping they would outweigh the bad. What a futile concept.

Long before this day I had asked Jesus to forgive each act I regretted; he said his death paid for them. That thought left me feeling a little vulnerable. I would be entering his presence with only that as my ticket to the Good Place. Was it enough? Was it true? I leaned back on the homework I had done. The people that lived with Jesus wrote down his words when he said that his death was enough payment and that he forgave me when I asked. I believed what he said was true. So, I let it rest.

I lived on, however, with hands and legs paralyzed. I'm accomplishing my marriage and raising our children. I understand how swiftly life can be taken or dramatically changed. So, I keep my accounts short with God and other people. I ask forgiveness, and I forgive. And I tell those that mean something to me that they do. Tomorrow may not be mine.



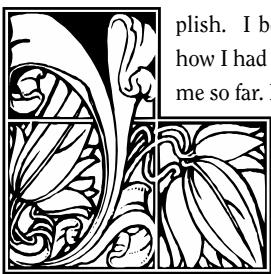
To leave a message, call (406) 587-9283.

breath. Something was very wrong. At the same time, great peace came over me like a comforting blanket. I wondered how those two feelings could happen simultaneously: peace, when something was wrong. It was the first of many miraculous interventions by God during the next few months and years.

During the first few hours in the hospital, the doctors and nurses worked soberly. I knew it was bad; I had lost a friend to a broken neck shortly before. Dick, my husband, leaned over me and, tight-lipped and pale, said, "The doctor gives you a 50-50 chance of living."

I didn't want to die. I had two small children

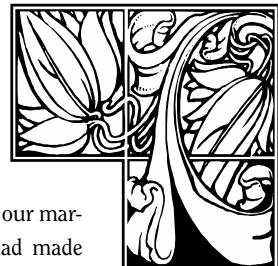
to raise and a marriage to accomplish. I began to look back over how I had invested the time given me so far. It was as if I were standing in my house,



hand on the door knob of my front door, looking back to see if all was in order before I locked the door and left for a very long

trip.

I was pleased and comforted with some investments. I had been grateful to my mother and told her I loved her. Dick and I had done what was necessary to get our marriage on stable ground again. I had made career changes in order to spend time with the children. I knew that parents only have a little



time to invest in them while they are children. No one knows how little time some may have. There was no one I had not forgiven and no one to whom I still needed to make things right. The relief was enormous.

Then, there were the regrets — wrongs against God and people. I was facing the eternal, and for all practical purposes, unknown. I was pressing against that thin membrane between this life and what would happen to me beyond. I knew better than to

I knew better than to carry in a bundle of good deeds hoping they would outweigh the bad. What a futile concept.



Crossing the Line of Faith

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(The pronoun "she" is used in this part simply because using he/she throughout became cumbersome.)

Use these three questions to assess if your friend is ready to turn her life over to Jesus.

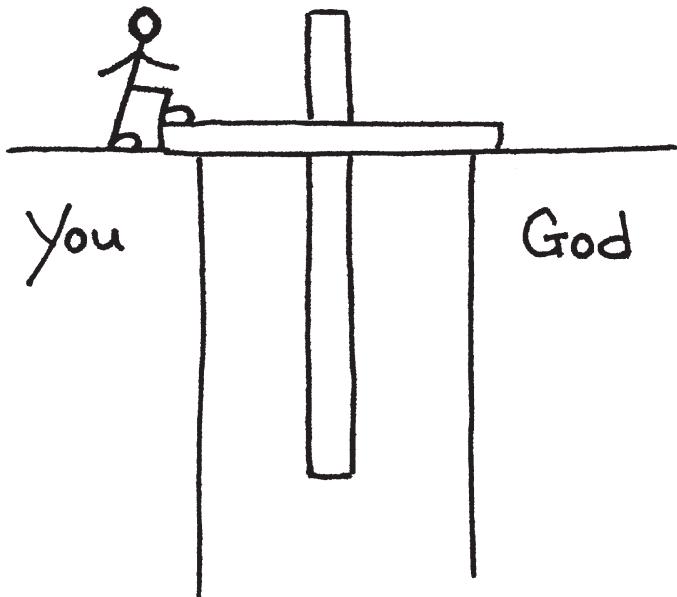
1. Have you come to the point of turning your life over to Christ, or are you still in the process of thinking it through?

It is all right if your friend is still in the process. Then, ask:

2. Where would you say you are right now in that process? Use the bridge illustration (simply the chasm and the cross) from One-Verser Evangelism in this section. Ask her to show you

where she is in the illustration, ready to walk across or further back and still thinking about it. If she appears to be open and ready to take the final step, ask:

3. Is there any reason why you wouldn't want to ask for God's forgiveness and turn over the direction of your life to Him right now? More often than you would expect, your friend will be ready for you to help her cross the line. At this point, Satan will wage spiritual battle, whispering in her ear to stop or put off the decision. Warn her that this may happen. Pray silently, binding Satan and asking God to release His power to help your friend come into a saving relationship with Jesus.



Pray together. Let her express her own heart to God. Prompt your friend to:

1. Ask for God's forgiveness for directing her own life (the root issue). Tell God she is turning her life over to Him - putting Jesus in the driver's seat.

2. Ask for God's forgiveness for any specific sins that come to mind. If she does not feel comfortable speaking these aloud, ask her to speak them aloud later when she's alone. Then, ask her about this later.

3. Thank God for forgiving her and for beginning to make changes on the inside. Thank God for taking control of her life.

one-verse EVANGELISM

Adapted from Randy Raysbrook, One-Verse Evangelism, Dawson Media (a ministry of The Navigators), Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1996. Used with permission.

How to Begin a Relationship with God

This is written as you might speak with a friend.

I am going to use one verse from the Bible and talk about each word in it. With a simple diagram, I can show you how to begin a relationship with God. He loves you more than I can say and wants to have a close relationship with you forever.

Please read Romans 6:23. *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Wages

How would you define **wages**?

Wages are the reward you receive for what you have done. How would you feel if your boss refused to pay you the wages that were due to you? It is only right that a person gets what he deserves. You earn wages from God for how you have lived your life.



Sin

What do you think of when you hear the word **sin**?

God is perfect in motives and actions. How would a person have to live in order to get into heaven and be with Him forever? Have you always lived life that way?

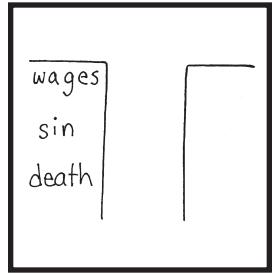


Sins are actions you know are wrong. Sin is also an attitude-a hostile or apathetic response to God. It is directing your own life rather than allowing Him to direct it.

Imagine that you agreed with your roommate on rules regarding your stereo. What would happen if she ignored the rules and broke your stereo? That would probably create a problem, a separation in your relationship. Your wrongs create a problem and separation between you and God. There is a chasm between you and Him.

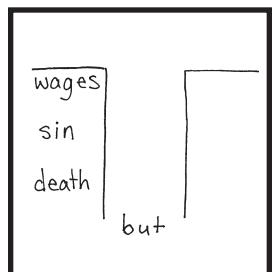
Death

Death separates us from those we love. When you die, your soul is separated from your body. If a person chooses to ignore the chasm between God and him/her, that separation will extend into eternity -- ultimately resulting in eternal separation in hell. They will not only experience separation from God in life, but also forever.



But

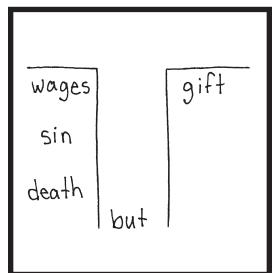
This is the most important word in the verse because it indicates that there is hope for all of us. What we've talked about so far is bad news, but God has good news.



Gift

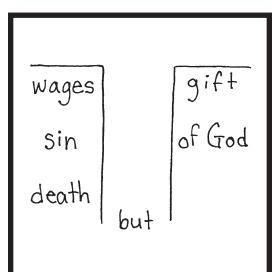
What is the difference between a gift and wages?

A gift is not earned by the person who receives it, but someone else pays for it.



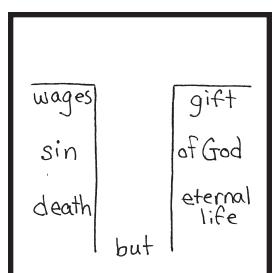
Of God

God wants to give you a gift. No person or church can give it to you. Only God can. Why do you think God would want to give you a gift?



Eternal Life

God wants to give you the gift of eternal life in a love-relationship with Him. Eternal life is the opposite of death. Death is separation; eternal life is a connected, love-relationship with God forever. Just as separation from God starts in this life on earth and extends into eternity, eternal life starts now and goes on forever.

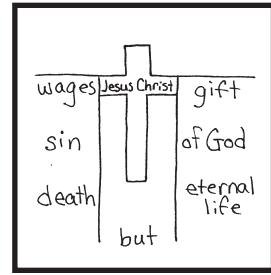


Some people try to earn God's gift of eternal life with Him by doing good deeds, living moral lives, or doing religious activities. But it is impossible and a waste of energy to earn something that has already been bought for you.

If you bought a special gift for a close friend to show how much they mean to you, how would you feel if they refused to accept it without paying you for it first?

Christ Jesus

God came to earth; that was Jesus Christ. He purchased the gift with His horrible death and miraculous resurrection. That's why you can only receive the gift of eternal life from God because He is the one who bought it for you and offers it to you.



Imagine a police officer writes you a ticket for speeding, you go to court, and the judge finds you guilty. But, to your surprise, the officer pays your fine out of his own pocket. In the same way, Jesus paid the fine for you -- death.

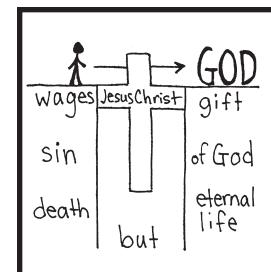
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Lord and Final Authority

You can receive God's gift by:

1. acknowledging to God that you have done wrong things. Ask Him to forgive you for as many as you can think of at this time. And turn away from them.

2. surrendering control of your life to Jesus. This means that He, the One who loves you more than anyone else does, will be the final authority in your life. Ask God's forgiveness for directing your own life independently from Him. This does not mean that you will be perfect. It means that you yield your life to Jesus and will live to please Him and no longer live to please yourself. You are letting Jesus be in the driver's seat.



As you ask God to forgive you and yield your life to Him to direct from now on, you are crossing the chasm and entering a love-relationship with God that will last forever – eternal life with Him starts now.

Receive God's Gift

If you were to place yourself on the bridge, where would you be? Are you far off to the left - far away from God – or close to the bridge and wanting to know more about Him?

Is there any reason why you should not ask for God's forgiveness and surrender your life to Him right now, receiving His gift of an eternal love-relationship with Him?

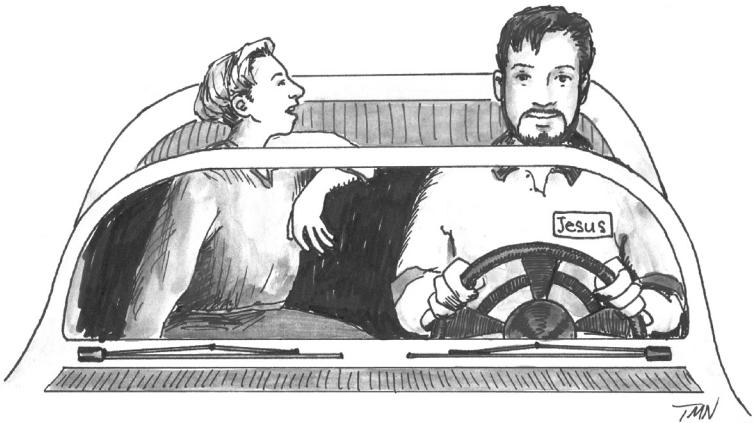
Talk to God like you would a close friend. Pour out your heart to Him asking His forgiveness for all you've done wrong, and turn your life over to Him.

my friend gave his life TO JESUS! NOW WHAT DO I DO?

Teach him these things first to help him learn to successfully walk with Jesus.

(The pronoun "he" is used in this part simply because using him/her throughout became cumbersome.)

- Teach him that when he received Jesus' payment for forgiveness for his sin and decided to give his life to Him, he became God's child. *Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. John 1:12-13*
- Help him understand that being a Christian means letting God direct his life everyday from now on. He needs to allow God, the most loving and wise Being in the universe, to be in the driver's seat. *And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. 2 Corinthians 5:15*
- Teach him that prayer is talking to God and listening as God talks to him. God will speak to him in the Bible as well as by giving him an impression or thought that leads him to do what is right. And he should tell God all of his concerns and know that He hears them and will intervene. Use the **Prayer** section. *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Philippians 4:6*
- Read the Bible with him. Show him how to find verses. Start with the gospel of John. Have him read, asking the questions, "What is the point God is trying to make in this chapter? How should I adjust my life to obey what I am reading here?" Use the **Study of the Gospel of John** in this notebook section. *Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. James 1:22*



→ **Have him make a list of everything he can think of that he has done wrong and write it down.** Then, have him ask Jesus to forgive him for each wrong action. He needs to ask those he has wronged to forgive him and then find ways to make restitution wherever possible. He can tear up the list when he's done. Use the **Moral Inventory** section. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*
1 John 1:9

→ **Have him list all those against whom he holds resentment.** He should take each one on the list and, in prayer, speak out forgiveness and then blessing. He can tear up the list when he's done. Repenting and forgiving allow God to clean his conscience and help him walk in freedom. Use the **Forgiving** section. *For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.* Matthew 6:14-15

→ **Teach him to explain the gospel. Help him write his testimony.** Both of you pray faithfully for those in his life who do not yet know Jesus. Use the material in the **Evangelism** section. *...And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.* 2 Corinthians 5:19-20

→ **Meet with him or call him several times a week for awhile so that you are available to support him and walk with him through these steps.** We were never meant to walk out our life with Christ without good friends close by. *But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.* Hebrews 3:13

SINCERE QUESTIONS

answering

Here are some questions that are often asked. Sometimes people ask them as a smoke-screen. It hides the real issue that holds them back from yielding their lives to Jesus. When that is the case, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal how you should answer them – maybe not with the answer to their question but with a loving revelation of the truth!

Sometimes, though, these are sincere questions about an area of concern to them. The questions need to be answered.

In order to be effective in responding, ask your friend questions to find out why this problem is important to him/her. For example, your friend asks: "Do you think all people who die without Christ will go to hell forever?" Before quickly responding, find out what previous experience may be triggering this question. Perhaps this person is thinking about a loved one who died without being a Christian. Your friend is struggling with the idea that the loved one may be eternally condemned.

Make your answers as thorough as you can and given with compassion and an attitude of service to your friend. If your answer leaves him/her unsatisfied, ask the person more questions to try to discover what he/she doesn't understand or finds difficult to accept. If necessary, tell your friend you'll come back with more information from additional resources.

Why does God permit suffering?

- **Genesis 3:1-24** The cause of suffering is people's sin and rebellion – not wanting God to direct their lives. God honors people's free choice to love and obey Him or not.
- **Romans 8:19-22** The resulting curse of people's sin affects the earth and, therefore, people.
- **James 4:1-3** Fights and wars are caused by the selfish (self-directed not God-directed) nature in people.

Will God condemn those who have never heard about Christ?

- **Romans 1:18-32** People are condemned because they have rejected God's revelations of Himself through creation. People everywhere have received this revelation.
- **Hebrews 11:6** God reveals Himself to whomever seeks Him.

If God loves people, will He send them to hell because they chose not to believe in Christ?

- **Matthew 25:41** Hell was created for the devil; it was not intended for people.
- **2 Peter 3:9** Jesus waits to return because He does not want anyone to experience the death caused by separation from Him.
- **Hebrews 9:12-14** God made the way to heaven at great cost to Himself.
- **Hebrews 2:2-3** How can we escape being judged if we ignore the costly path made for us to enter His holy presence? (Angels referred to here are ministering spirits bringing messages from God.)
- **Revelation 20:11-15** If their name is not in the book of life, they go to the lake of fire.
- **2 Thessalonians 1:8-9** Hell is being eternally separated from God's presence.

Will God allow good, moral non-Christians into heaven?

- **Romans 3:23** All fall short of His glory.
- **Romans 3:10** No one is righteous.
- **Isaiah 64:6** Our righteous acts are like filthy rags.
- **Genesis 3:5** Self-rule is the issue; being a god to yourself.
- **Matthew 6:9-10** May God's will be done **as it is in heaven**. If you don't want God's rule in your life now, you won't like heaven.

Is Christianity the only way to God?

- **John 14:6** Jesus is the way.
- **1 Timothy 2:5** Jesus Christ is the one mediator between God and people.
- **Colossians 1:19-20** The Christian God is the only one who paid for a relationship with Him with His own death. Other religions offer possible salvation through certain behavior.
(also Philippians 2:5-8)
- **Hebrews 7:25-27** This passage refers to Jesus Christ. (also Hebrews 9:12-14) The Christian God is the only one who became a man and paid for our salvation with His own suffering.

Will I be able to live the Christian life?

- **1 John 1:5-2:2** Walking in the light means to stay in open friendship with each other to help each other obey Jesus.
- **James 5:16** Confess your faults so you can be healed.
- **Philippians 2:12-13** God is at work within you giving you the ability to obey Him.

a study of the GOSPEL OF JOHN

Whenever you read the Bible, ask God to help you understand it. Ask Him to help you align your life with it. Stop after you read each chapter and answer the question(s) that go with it. Discuss the questions with your small group leader.

You may pace yourself through the twenty-one chapters three ways:

- 1 chapter per day for 3 weeks,
- 2 chapters per day for 11 days,
- 3 chapters per day for 7 days.

Read John chapter 1.

In John 1:1-18, who is the Word and what has the Word done?

On what basis are you a child of God?

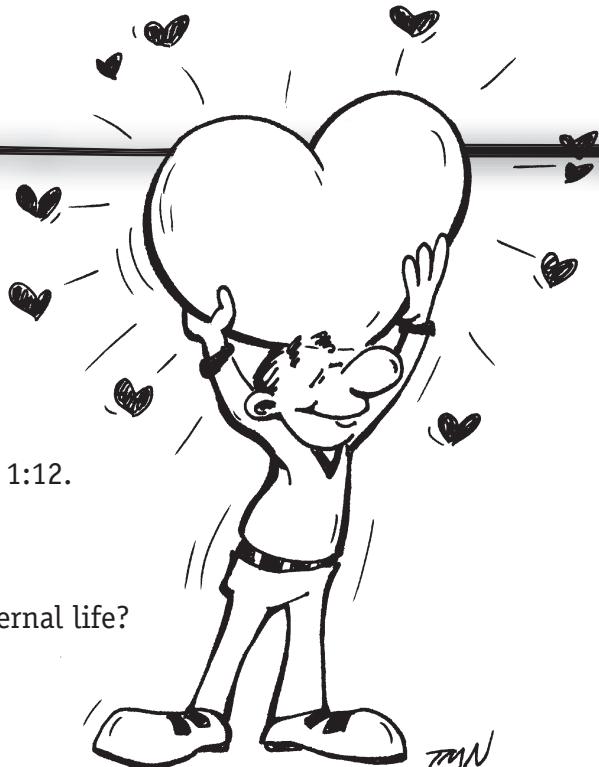
Jesus was baptized in water. You need to do this, too. Ask your small group leader to tell you about it.

John the Baptist (not the author of the gospel of John) says that Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit. More about this is discussed later in John.

Read John 2.

What was the result of the servants' obedience to Jesus?

What actions are you taking to obey Him?



Read John 3.

How does Jesus explain being "born again"? Compare John 1:12.

How do you know, according to chapter 3, that you have eternal life?

Read John 4.

John 4:1-26 is a story about Jesus and a Samaritan woman. Jesus knew all that this woman had done and was doing, but He remained with her and spent time with her.

What does this say about Jesus and His view of you and sin?

The Samaritan woman didn't wait until she was perfect to point others to Jesus. You don't have to wait either.

Read John 5.

In John 5:19-20, Jesus saw what the Father was doing in the situations that He encountered. Following Jesus' model, think of a situation or person and ask your heavenly Father what He's doing there or wanting to do. Ask Him to show you how to work with Him. He will show you how to pray for them and what to do. You will have a thought come to your mind or a gentle urging. God's voice will never violate what is written in the Bible or ask you to do something that is not loving.



Read John 6.

In John 6:50-71, Jesus picks up on the theme of the miraculous manna (bread) from heaven from the Old Testament. He describes himself as "bread." What does a person do to "eat" Christ? (You "take in" or "receive" bread. You "believe" it is good for you.)

What benefit is there for you?

What cost do you think the people saw that made them leave?

What will it cost you to stay with Jesus and completely follow Him?

Read John 7.

Why did the Pharisees seek to kill Jesus -- what was He claiming that angered them so?

John 7:41-44 What was the source of confusion? (Luke 2 tells where Jesus was born. Joseph was from Galilee and raised Jesus there.)

Read John 8.

In John 8:1-11 is the story of a woman caught in adultery. What character traits do you see in Jesus as He handles the situation?

Why do you think no one threw a stone?



What would you have done if you were part of the crowd? Or if you were the adulterous woman? Or if you were Jesus?

You have been forgiven by God. Now, you are to live a lifestyle of forgiving others.

Share a time when you received forgiveness.

Share a time when you forgave.

How did forgiving affect the situation? (your heart or emotions)

Read John 9.

John 9:8-34 Here's a little humor. Listen for the frustration in the formerly blind man. Notice the blind man's journey to

1. revelation,
2. understanding, and
3. faith that Jesus really was the promised Messiah and Savior.

Read John 10.

Describe the relationship between the sheep and the shepherd.

Read verses 3-15 and 27-29 again out loud. Substitute your name instead of "sheep" so that you see your relationship with the Shepherd.

What did Jesus claim that made the Jews want to stone Him?

Read John 11.

John 11:25-27 What choice is needed to access resurrection life?

Read John 12.

John 12:23-33 Following Jesus includes His journey to the cross and out the other side into resurrection. What are the advantages of a grain of wheat following this pattern?

What areas of your life (how you spend your time, energy, your money, etc.) need to "die" in order to more freely serve and follow Jesus?



Any sacrifice results in resurrection liberty -- just like Jesus sacrificing Himself resulted in His resurrection.

Read John 13.

What example did Jesus say He was giving (verse 15)?



What is the identifying mark of a disciple of Jesus?

What is the standard of what our love for one another as Christians should be?

How will you fulfill this command today or this week?

Read John 14.

In John 14:13-14, Jesus talks about getting your prayers answered. Does it mean that everything you ask for you get?

What do you think Jesus is trying to communicate here? Read 1 John 5:14-15 -- John's letter near the end of the Bible.

Read John 15.

How can you "abide" in Jesus?

How can you glorify Him? Be specific.

Read John 16.

In John 16:7, why was it necessary for Jesus to go away?

In John 16:13-15, what are the things the Holy Spirit will do?

In what ways would these affect your life?

Ask your small group leader to talk about the baptism with the Holy Spirit and show you the Scriptures that teach about it.

John 16:23-27 How does Jesus describe the relationship you can have with the Father?



Ask the Father often to help you know Him like this.

Read John 17.

John 17:20-26 What is Jesus praying for all His followers (including you)?

Ask God (right now) to answer this prayer in your life.

Now, in what specific way can you cooperate with Jesus' prayer today?

Read John 18.

Describe Jesus' kingship. (See also John 6:15.)

If Jesus is the King or ruler of your life, then, wherever you go, the kingdom of God is. Today, how might that knowledge affect your thinking and acting around people?

What happened when Jesus came near people?



The loving, healing, and truth-speaking that happened whenever Jesus came near people is what the Kingdom of God looks like. Those same things will happen through you as well. People will be loved. (Read Mark 16:15-18.)

Read John 19.

Look up these prophecies from the Old Testament (the part of the Bible that God had given the Jews before Jesus came to earth) that were fulfilled by Jesus. These are a few of over 300 prophecies fulfilled by Jesus' life on earth. Write a summarizing note under each pair of passages.

John 19: 23-24 – Psalms 22:1-8, 14-18

John 19:34,37 – Psalms 22:16-18

John 19:28-29 – Psalms 69:21

John 19:33, 36 – Psalms 34:20

Read John 20.

What did the resurrection prove to Thomas about who Jesus claimed He was?

It is significant that Jesus received Thomas' worship. Thomas recognized Jesus as God and Jesus received that acknowledgement. A common mark of a false religion or cult is the denial of Jesus' divinity.

How does Jesus' death and resurrection affect your life?

Read John 21.

Out of love for God, what actions can you take to tend His sheep (the lost ones and the ones in the fold)?

Discuss with your small group leader about spending time with God each day praying and reading the Bible. Like any relationship, the more time you and God spend together, the closer you become to each other.



Sources

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Ralph Neighbor, *Touching Hearts Guidebook*, TOUCH Outreach Ministries, Inc. Houston, Texas, 1997.
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list of SCRIPTURES

→ Our condition

Genesis 3:5	Eve tempted to be like God (god to ourselves –rule own life)
Isaiah 53:6	all like sheep gone astray
Isaiah 59:1-2	our sin separates us
Isaiah 64:6	righteous acts filthy rags
Romans 3:23	all sinned
Romans 6:23	wages of sin is death

→ God's plan

God's plan is **reconciliation**: make to agree; bring into harmony; make no longer opposed; make friends again.

Mark 8:31	foretold death and resurrection
John 11:49-52	Christ died for Israel and all other people
John 14:6	I am way, truth, life
Acts 4:12	no other name by which saved
Romans 5:6-11	while yet sinners; reconciled
1 Corinthians 15:1-8	gospel defined; passed on; Christ died for sins
2 Corinthians 5:21	Christ made to be sin for us; be reconciled
Ephesians 1:7,8	redemption through blood-grace
Colossians 1:19-23	Deity dwelt bodily, alienated because of evil actions, peace through Jesus' blood
1 Timothy 2:5-6	one mediator Jesus who gave self as ransom
Hebrews 9:22	no atonement without shedding of blood (Leviticus 17:11)
1 Peter 2:21-24	Christ bore our sins in His body, we die to sin
1 Peter 3:18	Christ suffered for sins – bring us to God

→ Our response

To repent: express the realization that we have done specific things that are wrong, we regret them, and we are willing to change.

Psalm 103:12	sins as far as east from west
Proverbs 28:13	confess and forsake sins and find compassion
Luke 15:1-7	lost sheep, rejoice over one repentant sinner
Luke 24:46-47	Christ's commission, repentance for forgiveness
Acts 2:38	repent
Acts 3:19	repent, turn to God, forgiveness and times of refreshing
Acts 26:16-20	Paul's conversion, deeds of repentance
Romans 2:4	His love draws us to repentance
2 Corinthians 7:9-10	godly sorrow produces repentance without regret
2 Peter 3:9	Christ not slow to return but wanting all to repent

→ To believe and receive

John 1:12	receive Him, believe on His name, child of God
John 3:16	God so loved
Ephesians 2:8-9	faith, by grace
Titus 3:3-7	saved by grace

→ To obey - to turn the direction of our life over to God

Luke 6:46-49	house on rock
John 14:15	love me, keep commandments
Acts 5:29	obey God not men
Romans 10:9	confess Jesus is Lord
2 Corinthians 5:14-15	no longer live for ourselves but for Him who died for us
Philippians 2:5-11	have same attitude of obedience as Christ

→ Hell, the alternative

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9	eternal destruction away from God's presence
Revelation 20:11-15	lake of fire, book of life

→ Other Scriptures

Psalm 40:1-3, 9-10

lifted out of pit, I speak of Your faithfulness
forgive men, God will forgive you

Matthew 6:14-15

Son of Man came to seek what was lost
all who receive Him become children of God
Word became flesh
seen Me, seen Father

Luke 19:10

John 1:12-13

John 1:14

John 14:9

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

become all things to all men so might save some
love compels us, not live for ourselves but for Jesus
committed to us message of reconciliation
don't be anxious, pray
rescued from dominion of darkness, brought us into kingdom of Son
encourage each other daily so not hardened by sin
don't just listen to Bible, do it
confess sins, forgiven
God loved us so He sent Son as atonement
perfect love drives out fear

2 Corinthians 5:14

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

Philippians 4:6

Colossians 1:13-14

Hebrews 3:13

James 1:22

1 John 1:9

1 John 4:10-11

1 John 4:18-19